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TOWARD A SMOKE-FREE WORKPLACE

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A Handbook for the Business Community

TOWARD A SMOKE-FREE WORKPLACE

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This booklet is dedicated to the innovative employers described within these pages. They have shown the foresight to protect their companies' greatest asset — their employees.

A special thanks to the friendly people who have shared their stories with me, from personnel clerks to company presidents.

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WHY A SMOKE-FREE WORKPLACE?

A staggering $410 billion was spent on health care in America in 1984 — and employers paid nearly half the cost. But this figure could be cut dramatically if employees quit smoking and if nonsmokers could work in a smoke-free environment.

Insurance companies — one of the richest sources of health data — have established that among 20 to 40 year olds, the average death rate of smokers is seven times that of nonsmokers. Those who smoke and those who are exposed to smoke at work also are more likely to develop respiratory diseases and other illnesses leading to disability retirements.

Undoubtedly, these and other statistics which pour in to the news media every day have contributed to a major social change — the recognition that cigarette smoking is an expensive, unhealthful, minority behavior.

Consequently, employers are beginning to adopt new attitudes about smoking. In the past, companies might encourage their employees to quit smoking "cold turkey" by offering them a frozen turkey. Today employers are offering employees significant bonuses and other incentives. Companies that used to forbid smoking only in production areas or near delicate equipment are now coming to realize the irony of protecting machines while forgetting about those who run them. Going one step further, some companies are giving preference in hiring to nonsmokers and openly advertising for nonsmoking employees.

Because **these companies reflect a new wave of business philosophy**, stories describing their smoke-free endeavors appear regularly in THE NEW YORK TIMES, NEWSWEEK, BUSINESS WEEK, the CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR, the WALL STREET JOURNAL, BUSINESS INSURANCE and the LOS ANGELES TIMES. One recent story reported that 51% of 100 Fortune 1000 companies surveyed by Burke Marketing Research have designated nonsmoking areas.

Other actions creating smoke-free work areas that have attracted much attention are the enactment of laws. For instance, in March, 1984, when San Francisco created a citywide ordinance to protect workers from secondhand smoke, it became national front-page news. Los Angeles, the second largest city in the country, followed suit within the year. Today, approximately 20 states and several hundred cities and counties have laws governing smoking in workplaces.

Litigation has also cleared the air in work environments. Some employees have taken their employers to court, demanding smoke-free work areas, disability retirements or unemployment compensation because of smoke at work.

Therefore, as a matter of prudence, companies are taking a second look at their policies — moving away from encouraging and tolerating smoking and moving toward encouraging and supporting people who are choosing to follow the Surgeon General's advice.

This booklet examines why many employers are establishing nonsmoking policies. Beyond health complications — smoking is the number one cause of preventable death in America, responsible for 1/3 to 1/2 million premature deaths annually — there are economic, legal and social reasons. We'll take a look at how other companies across the country have dealt with this issue and offer concrete suggestions from those employers and health professionals on how to successfully create a smoke-free environment in your company.

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HOW AMERICANS VIEW SMOKING IN THE 80's

Seventy-one percent of all adult Americans are nonsmokers, according to a nationwide survey conducted by the Gallup organization in 1983. In the words of Robert Beck, Executive Vice President of Bank of America, "You don't want to tell your majority, 'Well, the heck with you.'" Beck voices the concern that's developing among employers about smoking's impact on the comfort and health of their nonsmoking workers. Workplace smoking controls also help workers who smoke to cut down or quit — and 90% of smokers say they want to quit, according to a 1975 U.S. government survey, "Adult Use of Tobacco." Many studies document workers' concerns about smoking and how it affects them. Here are the conclusions, plus a sampling of the studies:

- **Most Americans believe smokers should refrain from smoking around nonsmokers.** A 1983 national survey conducted by the Gallup organization, commissioned by the American Lung Association, found that 55% of smokers and 82% of nonsmokers believe smokers shouldn't light up around nonsmokers.
- **Most people believe smoking hurts nonsmokers.** The Gallup poll found 64% of smokers and 84% of nonsmokers believe smoking is hazardous to the health of nonsmokers. That shows a considerable rise of concern compared to earlier polls.
- **In the workplace, the effects of smoking on all workers are of particular concern.** A 1978 survey of 14,000 Baltimore Social Security Administration employees found 76% of nonsmoking employees declared they were bothered by smoke from others. Pacific Telephone recently surveyed its employees and found 60% of all employees were bothered by smoke at work; 80% of nonsmoking employees were bothered.
- **Employees report that smoke at work affects their job performance.** In the Pacific Telephone survey, 27% of employees said smoke at work interfered with their work. A 1979 investigation by C.B. Barad of more than 10,000 nonsmoking office workers found that more than 50% had difficulty working near a smoker and 36% were forced to move from their work stations to escape smoke.
- **Concern about forced smoking in the workplace is growing.** One indicator is a confidential Roper study done for the Tobacco Institute, which was mistakenly released by the Federal Trade Commission in 1979. During the two-year period, 1976 to 1978, public support for workplace separation of smoking increased 9%.
- **Employees will accept smoking controls at work.** This has been the experience of thousands of companies that have instituted new smoking control policies.

For example, national media attention focused on employers in San Francisco when its citywide workplace ordinance went into effect. Reporters converged to cover whatever backlash might occur. But the story that reporters found was "There is no story." New controls went into effect smoothly, just as public opinion studies had predicted.

A 1975 U.S. Public Health Service report showed that 78% of all persons surveyed agreed that employers have the right to prohibit smoking at work. In Minnesota, where the law requires workplace smoking controls, a 1980 survey showed 92% of citizens favor the law, including 87% of people who smoke two packs of cigarettes per day.

A Gallup poll, released December 6, 1985, showed 87% of smoking and nonsmoking employees in favor of a ban on smoking at work or creation of nonsmoking areas.

Acceptance of non smoking policies is indicated at every level in the work force. When the Pacific Telephone survey determined the percentage of management and nonmanagement employees who felt the company should be concerned about smoking at the workplace, they found 73% of management believed the company should be concerned, and 74% of nonmanagement concurred.

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MEDICAL EVIDENCE

The Surgeon General of the United States reports that 400,000 Americans die prematurely each year because they smoke. More than 50,000 scientific studies have linked smoking with various health problems. Employers are considering that information and its effects within their companies.

For instance, the annual death toll of 400,000 can be translated to 1,000 deaths daily from cigarette smoking. That's the equivalent of three jumbo jets crashing, killing all aboard. The business community certainly would be concerned if 1,000 *air* travelers died daily, especially if many of the victims were being lost from the work force.

The Surgeon General and the World Health Organization have labeled smoking the largest single preventable cause of death in America. Employers are echoing that conclusion. Dr. Loring Wood, Medical Director for Research and Development at New York Telephone Company, says, "We view smoking as the principal health hazard of this company."

Here are some measures of that hazard — facts and figures that are impelling employers to take steps to limit smoking:

- **One in ten smokers will fall victim to lung cancer.** Employers are beginning to perceive smoking as a form of Russian roulette by their employees. L. Jefferson Stulce, President of Chubb/Colonial Life America, offers smoking cessation programs to his employees because of his personal experience with the risks of smoking: his brother and his brother-in-law died of smoking-related diseases.
- **One-third of all cancer deaths are attributable to smoking,** according to the 1982 Surgeon General's report. It explains that smoking not only increases the incidence of lung cancer and cancer in the mouth and throat, it increases cancers in the bladder, kidney, pancreas, stomach and cervix.
- **One-fourth of all coronary heart disease is the result of smoking,** according to the National Cancer Institute. Contrary to popular perceptions, heart disease is a greater risk of smoking than lung cancer. As a thoracic physician once said, when asked why all smokers don't get lung cancer, "Most of them die of a heart attack first."
- **Smoking is responsible for more than 80% of bronchitis and emphysema** — major causes of disability retirements. This conclusion was reported in 1976 in a presentation to the National Academy of Sciences by Dr. Gio Gori, a leading government researcher on the effects of smoking.
- **Female workers who smoke and use the Pill suffer extra risks.** That's why the federal government requires a warning about smoking on all oral contraceptive packages.
- **Smoking has many negative effects on the outcome of pregnancy,** according to the 1980 Surgeon General's report, which focused on the dangers of smoking for women. Women who smoke experience more trouble conceiving, more spontaneous abortions, more stillbirths and more malformed children; their babies are more likely to die early in life.
- **Smoking is linked to workplace accidents.** The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health reports that smoking workers have twice as many on-the-job accidents as workers who don't smoke. Several auto insurance companies have determined that their smoking policyholders experience up to 2.6 times as many auto accidents as policyholders who don't smoke.

The Uncomfortable Majority

Secondhand smoke is a health hazard. In the 1982 Surgeon General's Report this recommendation was given, "... prudence dictates that nonsmokers avoid exposure to secondhand tobacco smoke." In 1985, with increased information available, the Surgeon General went further: "We believe that there is all the medical evidence necessary to support reasonable and sensible protection for the nonsmoker against the irritation and potential harm that comes from other people's smoke." Here are the findings, citing some representative research:

- **Nonsmokers exposed to tobacco smoke frequently report eye irritation, nasal symptoms, headache and coughing.** One of the earliest studies was performed by Dr. Frederic Speer, a member of the Pediatric Allergy Service at the University of Kansas Medical Center. In his study of 441 nonsmokers divided into two groups

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— those with a history of allergies and those without — 70% of both groups suffered from eye irritation caused by smoke. Even among the nonallergic group, 30% developed headaches and nasal discomforts, while 25% experienced coughs.

• **Nonsmokers who work for a long time in areas where smoking is present show as much loss of lung function in small airways as light smokers** and smokers who do not inhale. This was the conclusion of a study performed by a physician and an exercise physiologist. Their findings were published in the prestigious NEW ENGLAND JOURNAL OF MEDICINE, March 27, 1980.

• **Lung cancer in nonsmokers is linked to smoke exposure** by several medical studies in America and abroad. In the United States, as many as 5,000 nonsmokers a year die of lung cancer caused by secondhand smoke, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. That calculation made headlines nationwide in the autumn and winter of 1984 when it was released by James Repace, an EPA physicist and policy analyst, and Alfred Lowrey, a research chemist at the EPA. Their findings, based upon a three-year study of the lung cancer mortality rates uncovered by the medical researchers, have been accepted by the carcinogenic assessment panel of the EPA, headed by an epidemiologist, and were published in ENVIRONMENT INTERNATIONAL, May, 1985.

• **For many individuals who already have health problems, smoke in the atmosphere is a special hazard,** which may precipitate angina, breathing problems or allergy attacks. These susceptible individuals form a significant part of most employee populations. For instance, among a work force population at the Social Security Administration offices in Baltimore, 10% had heart problems, 39% reported respiratory problems and 10% declared they were allergic to tobacco smoke.

• **For contact lens wearers, tobacco smoke particles may cause eye irritation.**

The Nonsmokers' Dilemma

If nonsmokers are becoming forced smokers by breathing smoke from other people's cigarettes, how much are they smoking? How significant a problem is secondhand smoke?

EPA physicist James Repace calculates that "Nonsmokers who are chronically exposed to tobacco combustion products in [the] workplace may inhale the equivalent of 27 low-tar cigarettes a day and routinely suffer from gross violations of national air quality standards for respirable suspended particles...." Citing another calculation, Surgeon General Koop, speaking to a business audience in New York City, November 6, 1985, said that a nonsmoking employee, who shares an office with an employee who smokes two packs of cigarettes a day, smokes three cigarettes a day involuntarily."

Here are some other measurements of the hazard:

• **In one hour in a smoke-filled environment, nonsmokers may inhale volatile nitrosamines (cancer-causing agents), as much as is found in 5-30 cigarettes.** This finding was presented to the Second Joint Conference of the Chemical Institute of Canada and the American Chemical Society at their 1977 meeting in Montreal.

• According to the December 1980 issue of THE LANCET, test results indicate that **carbon monoxide levels in the blood of nonsmokers after 30 minutes in a smoke-filled room increased to a level nearly equal to the increase found after active smoking of one cigarette.**

Beyond The Smoke Screen

• **Tobacco smoke often acts synergistically with other pollutants,** multiplying the effects of dangerous agents in the workplace, according to a 1977 issue of THE SMOKING DIGEST, a publication of the National Cancer Institute. For instance, asbestos workers who smoke are 92 times more likely to develop lung cancer than nonsmoking asbestos workers, and uranium miners who smoke have 10 times the risk of nonsmoking uranium miners. Tobacco smoke in the air complicates any problems already existing in office workplaces, including fumes from reproduction fluids, formaldehyde insulation and other pollutants. These effects can have an impact on nonsmokers, too.

• **There are also safety considerations that support creating a smoke-free workplace.** As many as 33% of fires in non-residential places are related to smoking, according to records compiled by the National Fire Protection Association. Some insurance companies have negotiated lower fire insurance premiums for smoke-free workplaces.

• **Employers often provide assistance programs for their employees who have problems with alcohol and other legal and illegal drugs.** Now they're coming to agree with the Director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse who said, "Smoking cigarettes made of tobacco is the top American drug problem in terms of personal health."

• **Nonsmoking employees resent having to work in an environment in which they are constantly being exposed to a toxic substance that will affect their health.** It is difficult for them to be positive and productive when their coworkers and employers make their working environment unpleasant and unhealthful.

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THE COSTS OF SMOKING

Smoking's negative effects on health and safety produce financial losses, too. Society as a whole — and employers in particular — suffer the economic impact. Smoking can increase:

health care costs
absenteeism
tardiness
employee morale problems
disability retirements
survivors' benefits
prescription drug inefficacy
accidents
fires
lost productivity
air cooling, heating and ventilation costs
maintenance expenses
property damage
litigation costs
compensation claims
insurance expenses
taxes

Two economists have led the field in trying to quantify these losses for employers. Dr. Marvin Kristein is a health economist at the State University of New York at Stony Brook and Chief of the Division of Health Economics at the American Health Foundation. He says the total economic cost of cigarette smoking per year to American industry is $47.5 billion. Recently, Congress concurred with Kristein's calculations; the Office of Technology Assessment estimated that smoking costs our society $65 billion a year for health care costs and lost productivity (Staff Memo, September, 1985). For a large company like AT&T, with 800,000 employees (pre-divestiture), an average 6% productivity loss due to smoking would cost nearly $170 million annually (IMPROVING THE WORK ENVIRONMENT, 1984). Kristein calculates that the average smoking worker costs his or her employer $1,000 every year compared to a nonsmoking worker.

In the Pacific Northwest, Dr. William Weis is Chairman of the Accounting Department and Director of the Smoking Policy Institute at the Albers School of Business, Seattle University. He puts a whopping $4,611 price tag on each smoking worker and he says his numbers are underestimates. Here's his breakdown of costs:

absenteeism	$ 220
medical care	230
morbidity and early mortality	765
insurance (non-health)	90
job time lost	1,820
property damage	500
maintenance	500
nonsmokers sickened	486
	$4,611

Lost productivity is the biggest cost factor created by smoking in Weis' calculations. Recently he suggested that, because of the inefficiency of smoking workers, the work of 100 smoking employees could be accomplished by about 92 nonsmokers.

While academic economists calculate, employers are learning the effects of smoking in their companies firsthand. Here are some examples:

- The Chairman of General Motors, quoted in the Washington JOURNAL-AMERICAN, estimates that smoking-related costs add $500 to the price tag for each auto that rolls off the assembly line.
- A study conducted by the Midland Division of Dow Chemical, with 5,693 employees, demonstrated that the company spent $657,000 annually in excess wage costs alone because of smoking by employees.
- When Merle Norman Cosmetic Company in Los Angeles banned smoking from work stations, they saved $13,500 the first year from reduced housekeeping costs. Lower absenteeism and increased productivity also resulted.
- The Robert Nolan consulting firm found that the typical smoker puffs away 30 minutes of productivity daily. At wages of $4 an hour, this lost productivity alone would cost the employer $500 annually per smoking employee.
- After Unigard Insurance in Seattle went smoke-free, their maintenance contractor voluntarily reduced his fee by $500 per month. Vice President Robert Barnitt said the contractor reduced the charges since he no longer had to dump and clean ashtrays or dust desks and clean carpets as frequently.
- The Alexandria, Virginia Fire Department, like a number of other fire departments, now hires

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only nonsmoking firefighters. They calculated that a disability retirement costs the city $300,000 more than a routine retirement. No nonsmokers have ever been placed on heart and lung disability in their department, according to Chief Charles Rule.

- Wanda Hodges is Director of Operations for the Non-Smokers Inn in Dallas, which is entirely smoke-free, and the Dollar Inn in Albuquerque, which offers both smoking-permitted and smoke-free rooms. Based on studies conducted within the two companies, she says that nonsmoking rooms rent 30% faster than smoking-permitted rooms and the costs for maintenance are 50% lower in nonsmoking rooms. She also found her smoking employees were late to work 50% more frequently than nonsmoking employees.
- At Weyerhaeuser, the national distributor of building materials, a company study concluded, "We estimate smoking costs at Corporate Headquarters to be $4.9 million [a year]."
- Companies such as Austad's in Sioux Falls, South Dakota and Radar Electric in Seattle have reduced health insurance costs as a result of their nonsmoking policies.

Walter B. Gerken, Chairman of the Board of Pacific Mutual Life Insurance Company, predicts, "Insurance carriers can envision, and welcome, a time in the near future when enough individuals make the personal decision to quit smoking, that group discounts to nonsmoking companies will become an actuality."

Perhaps that day has come. Phoenix Mutual Life Insurance Company of Hartford offers lower group insurance rates to small employers who can prove that none of their employees smokes. Blue Cross and Blue Shield in Roanoke, Virginia recently began offering discount group health insurance for nonsmokers in small companies. Blue Cross and Blue Shield, Minnesota has been offering a 22% discount on health insurance for several years.

Morale IS Bottom Line

Although economic factors are important, most businesses safeguard the environment of their employees because they value their workers. A. Judson Wells, Ph.D., former Director of Special Products Division at E.I. du Pont de Nemours and Co., says, "I was in the business world a long time, and I can tell you, the real bottom line for employers is not really cost. Employers care about the well-being of their employees."

Happily, nonsmoking policies improve employee morale and productivity. Business professor Weis has tracked many companies through the process of creating new nonsmoking policies. Oftentimes, companies chose to act because of the economic data. But, reporting their results to Weis, most companies enthusiastically stated that they regarded their improved employee morale as the top benefit of their new policies. One such enthusiast is Andrew Smith, president of Pacific Northwest Bell. Employer of 15,000, the phone company for Washington, Oregon and Idaho, PNB went entirely smoke-free October 15, 1985. Says President Smith of their decision, "There are compelling reasons for doing this — but the bottom line is our employees. Pacific Northwest Bell cares about the people who work here."

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LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Fulfilling legal requirements and avoiding legal liabilities rank high among the reasons why employers are now controlling smoking in the workplace.

Approximately 20 states and several hundred cities and counties have statutes regulating smoking in the workplace.

These states control smoking in government and private workplaces:

Connecticut
Florida
Maine
Minnesota
Montana
Nebraska
New Jersey
Utah.

These states control smoking in government workplaces only:

Alaska
Arkansas
California
Hawaii
Iowa
Nevada
New Hampshire
New Mexico
Oregon
Washington
Wisconsin.

At least 66 California cities and counties have adopted laws protecting employees from smoke in private workplaces. The communities include: Fresno, Los Angeles, Monterey, Orange County, Palo Alto, Pasadena, Sacramento, San Diego, Santa Barbara, San Francisco and San Jose. More than half of California's citizens are covered by local laws. Significantly, every community that has considered a local ordinance has enacted a local ordinance.

Cities and counties in Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Massachusetts, New York, Washington, Wisconsin, Texas and elsewhere have enacted local ordinances.

Courts Clear the Air at Work

Some employers have been required by courts to provide smoke-free working conditions for their employees. Common law requires employers to provide a safe workplace and the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requires employers to make reasonable accommodation for handicapped workers; several employees have compelled their companies to provide smoke-free areas in fulfillment of those requirements. Courts have required employers to pay disability payments or workers' compensation to employees harmed by smoke at work. Employers have been sued for wrongful discharge in cases where employees were fired for protesting about smoke in their workplace. Here is a sampling of cases:

• COMMON LAW — In the 1976 case, SHIMP VS. NEW JERSEY BELL, a telephone company representative won a permanent injunction banning smoking in the Millville office where she worked. An employee of New Jersey Bell for many years, the plaintiff, Donna Shimp, suffered erosion of the cornea and other serious effects from the smoke of co-workers. Superior Court Judge Philip A. Gruccio ruled tobacco smoke was an unnecessary toxic substance in the workplace. In his decision, he noted the following:

> "The company already has in effect a rule that cigarettes are not to be smoked around telephone equipment. The rationale behind the rule is that the machines are extremely sensitive and can be damaged by the smoke. Human beings are also very sensitive and can be damaged by cigarette smoke. Unlike the damage to a piece of machinery, the damage to a human is all too often irreparable. If a circuit or wiring goes bad, the company can install a replacement part. It is not so simple in the case of a human lung, eye, or heart.... A company that has demonstrated such concern for its mechanical components should have at least as much concern for its human beings."

• DISABILITY AND UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION — Numerous other actions have been taken by employees seeking a smoke-free working environment since the Shimp case. Here are some:

-Teresa Hallford of Georgia left her State Merit System job because of cigarette smoke there and won three months of unemployment compensation.

-Federal economist Werner

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Peterke was awarded workers' compensation for asthma and bronchitis induced by smoke in his workplace.

-Flight attendant Harriet Brooks was awarded workers' compensation for medical and legal costs because of an on-the-job injury — illness caused by tobacco smoke in the aircraft.

-Tari Way of Wisconsin was granted total permanent disability because of her workplace smoking exposure.

• LEGAL HANDICAP — In September, 1982, a Federal District Court in Seattle ruled that sensitivity to tobacco smoke is a legal handicap under the terms of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The case was brought by Lanny Vickers, a 44-year-old purchasing agent with the Veterans Administration Hospital, who suffers from respiratory problems; his employer now provides a smoke-free work area. The Act applies to the federal government and recipients of federal funds. It requires "reasonable accommodation" for handicapped workers. Companies found to be in violation of the Act risk the loss of all their government contracts.

• EMOTIONAL STRESS — In December of 1982 the California Court of Appeals ruled that Paul Hentzel, who was fired for demanding a smoke-free work area, could sue his former employer, the Singer Company, for "intentional infliction of emotional distress" and wrongful discharge.

Labor Unions

A concern for many companies is whether they can institute nonsmoking policies unilaterally. In an oral opinion, the National Labor Relations Board states that "absent specific contractual language guaranteeing the right to smoke, a unilateral decision can be made." If a union contract contains specific language about smoking, then the matter should be submitted to the collective bargaining procedure, but the employer should emphasize that the new policy is necessary to eliminate a workplace hazard.

"Only Nonsmokers Need Apply"?

It comes as a surprise to many to learn that hiring only nonsmokers is legal. A number of companies do, openly advertising for nonsmoking employees. Legal protection from discrimination in employment is guaranteed by our government only where discrimination is based upon inherent characteristics, such as race, sex, age or national origin. Smoking is neither an inherent characteristic nor constitutionally protected. The federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, quoted in the WALL STREET JOURNAL, April 15, 1982, has said it is not illegal to discriminate against smokers.

An applicant who smoked could bring suit, of course, but it would be a difficult task to defend a self-destructive habit that also harms co-workers and costs the employer money.

Some employers have a special interest in hiring nonsmokers. The Holden, Massachusetts, Police Department adopted its policy of hiring only nonsmokers when they realized the Department was spending 9% of its annual personnel budget on disability pensions for two former police officers who smoked, victims of high blood pressure and heart disease. Massachusetts law presumes both disorders to be job-related. The Alexandria, Virginia, Fire Department stopped hiring smokers a number of years ago when they realized all their firefighters who retired prematurely on heart and lung disability were smokers. The Oklahoma City Fire Department recently won in court when a former employee, who signed an agreement that he was a nonsmoker but was fired after being seen smoking in a public place, challenged the Department on his dismissal. The Fire Department returned to court and sued the ex-employee for court costs and damages and won that case, too.

Certainly, the freedom of employees to make choices in their lives must be balanced against the responsibility of employers to pay for the results of those choices. And companies making the legal decision to hire only nonsmokers must recognize the value decisions they are making, if they elect that choice.

Still, employers who have gone that route, even businesses without the special concerns of police and fire departments, are comfortable with their choice. Vaughn Sink, of Sullivan, Higdon and Sink, an advertising agency in Wichita, Kansas, says they promote their smoke-free environment as a company benefit and, when hiring, advertise for nonsmokers only, asking for "copywriters with dirty fingers and clean lungs."

Many companies without an official policy of hiring only nonsmokers are already making that decision informally. Robert Half International interviewed vice presidents and personnel directors of America's 1,000 largest companies in 1985. They found 46% would choose a nonsmoker over a smoker in deciding between two otherwise equally qualified applicants. Only 3% would prefer a smoker. Among the surveyed vice presidents and personnel directors, 76% were themselves nonsmokers (a typical smoking prevalence for people in their positions) but "... even those respondents who smoked showed a preference for the nonsmoking job candidates," according to Robert Half.

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A TYPICAL SUCCESS STORY

Fred Vandegrift is the publisher of the SALINA JOURNAL, the daily newspaper in Salina, Kansas. He'd been getting numerous complaints from employees who were bothered by smoking at work. So he decided to make the JOURNAL a smoke-free workplace, effective New Year's Day, 1984. He also offered a $500 bonus to any smoking employee who quit during the first three months of the year.

Among the smokers: Fred Vandegrift. He'd quit several times in his life, but was smoking between two and three packs a day when he made the advance announcement of the ban. "Certainly the policy was an encouragement to me. I wanted to quit. It doesn't take a genius to know it's not good for you." The publisher wrote himself a $500 check on April 1, 1984.

Twenty-five of his thirty-one employees who were smokers on January 1 also earned $500 checks on April 1. The new ex-smokers thanked him for his help. One circulation department employee, who had once kicked the habit for a year on a $5 bet, was particularly delighted with the $500 incentive.

Vandegrift had some apprehension that the ban would be a problem, but in the first quarter of the year the new policy was effected, only one cigarette was smoked in the building; a customer came in smoking, not noticing signs posted at all entrances, but politely returned outside to dispose of his cigarette upon request.

The real shocker, entirely unanticipated, was public response to the new policy. The story made headlines nationwide. At least 20 radio stations and a half dozen TV stations called requesting to interview Vandegrift. Hundreds of letters poured in from all over the country. Other employers considering such a move themselves, or merely intrigued by the JOURNAL's action, wrote requesting information. Workers from other companies wrote to applaud the JOURNAL and say that they wished they had smoke-free jobs, too. Vandegrift says 99% of the response was positive.

The story of the SALINA JOURNAL's new nonsmoking policy contains three elements usually encountered by companies that decide to go smoke-free:

- They were apprehensive.
- Implementation of the policy was much easier than they had anticipated.
- They were flooded by good publicity and by positive responses from other employers and employees outside the company.

The JOURNAL's experience also contains an interesting example of changing attitudes toward smoking: Forty years ago, during World War II, a printer at the newspaper, Dick Levin, was serving in the Navy, stationed in the Aleutian Islands. The JOURNAL, in a friendly gesture typical of the era, sent him five cartons of cigarettes. "Now," says Levin, a little perplexed, "they're offering me $500 to quit."

The JOURNAL did lose some cigarette advertising. They were also challenged by employees and the public to drop cigarette advertising altogether. The argument was that it was inconsistent to ban smoking because it was a health hazard while continuing to accept income from cigarette promotion. So on January 1, 1985, the JOURNAL dropped all cigarette advertising.

Fred Vandegrift, however, is again a smoker; the publisher steps outside for a cigarette, even during a cold Kansas winter.

(Update for the second edition: Vandegrift, still a smoker, is now retired. New publisher Harris Rayl reports that the policy on smoking is no longer a matter for comment, but is accepted as the established way of business. But their decision to refuse tobacco ads generated much positive support from readers; many said they had been offended by cigarette ads. Asked about the loss of income from the ads, Rayl said, "We do make a little less money. But it was a good decision, morally, and in terms of public relations.")

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ESTABLISHING A POLICY

Creating a good smoking control policy and implementing it successfully are much the same as creating any good personnel policy. The basics include demonstrating enthusiastic support from top management, involving employees, providing adequate information, giving advance notice, making sure all questions are addressed, and being firm once the policy is implemented. Your company probably has its own internal procedures for creating new policies.

The biggest hurdle is making the decision to create and support a nonsmoking environment. Remember though, not addressing the conflict between smokers and nonsmokers just intensifies the problem.

Smoking is an addictive behavior. And social norms have tolerated it for years. Consequently, change in this area must be instituted carefully. (A formula for certain failure: lack of information and lack of advance notice.)

Employers and advisors involved in developing new policies have come up with some ideas that may be helpful to you. Here are their suggestions:

Vocabulary

It's nice to call the new policy a nonsmoking policy or a policy for a smoke-free workplace rather than a smoking policy. This establishes the idea that nonsmoking is the norm and that the policy addresses where smoking will be permitted.

Don't label people as smokers and nonsmokers. Refer to "employees who smoke." Make it clear that individuals and their smoking behaviors are separable and that it's "smoking" that will be controlled, not "smokers."

Avoid using the word "right" to describe freedom to smoke. Say "preference" or "desire" or "smoking behavior." "Right" seems to imply legal and ethical entitlement to smoke; it bolsters the respectability of smoking." Your vocabulary about smoking should address it as a health problem, not a personal right.

Research

Assess your company's situation. Find out how smokers, the general employee population and unions feel about nonsmoking policy. Find out the ratio of smokers to nonsmokers and whether certain areas of your company are more likely to have complaints about smoking.

Determine how well your facilities are suited for proposed changes. Can cafeterias and other areas accommodate separate sections for smoking and nonsmoking? What are the ventilation patterns in different areas? You'll need to decide what signs you want to use and to obtain signs. Ashtrays must be removed from nonsmoking areas and receptacles for cigarettes provided at entrances to nonsmoking areas.

Timing is important, too. It may be easier to go smoke-free in the summer when employees can step outside for a smoke. Or you may want to tie in the introduction of your nonsmoking policy with your annual meeting or another event like the American Cancer Society's Great American Smoke-out, which is held the Thursday before Thanksgiving.

Robert Rosner, Executive Director of the Smoking Policy Institute, Albers School of Business, Seattle University, has helped many companies implement new smoke-free policies. He suggests having one progressive section or division of a company try a pilot program first. Once it's completed, the pilot program can serve as an example to other sections of the company.

Education

When MSI Insurance announced its new policy, it issued an internal memo which started this way, "The loss of the lives of over 200 marines in Lebanon several weeks ago shocked and angered us all." The message went on to compare that death toll to the loss of 1,000 Americans who die prematurely each day from smoking. Comparing smoking's death toll to a current disaster helps people to recognize the enormity of the smoking problem and to respond to it more personally.

Provide nonsmokers with suggestions on how to be gentle. It's not easy to give up smoking, so those working around employees who are quitting should be under-

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standing and supportive. How nonsmokers behave can make or break your new policy.

When Group Health Cooperative in Washington went smoke-free, it prepared a film for its 6,000 employees. The film featured interviews with employees who smoked, explaining why they supported the policy.

Your educational program in advance of the implementation of the new policy can utilize films, talks, your company newsletter, posters, paycheck inserts, questionnaires.

Changing Attitudes

Education to support a new nonsmoking norm at work starts at the top. Changing your own attitudes is probably the most difficult educational task you'll perform.

Social acceptance has enabled smoking to produce devastation in our society. Individuals involved in changing behaviors regarding smoking, bucking old norms, may experience some trepidation. Accept that as part of the process of change; your discomfort can be interpreted as a signal that your actions are significant.

An instructive parallel exists with society's changing attitudes about alcohol — our other popular, legal and dangerous drug. Nonusers harmed by users are seeking legal protection. Image makers are accepting their responsibility to effect change: TV depicts people having fun without a drink; comics don't portray drunkenness as laughable. On a personal level, individuals are providing nonalcoholic drinks at parties in their homes and saying no to friends who want to drive while drunk.

Nonsmokers, who are harmed by tobacco smoke but are not addicted to its use, are demanding legal and social protection from tobacco's hazards. Movie makers no longer show heros lighting cigarettes for heroines. Drug education groups and medical professionals are calling for restrictions on cigarette advertising, especially where children are exposed to it. Individuals are providing nonsmoking areas at parties in their homes and putting up No Smoking signs on their front doors.

An angry social critic once said, "If you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem." A positive interpretation of that message is that any action that supports nonsmoking helps to discourage smoking. While our society values freedom for individuals, including the freedom to make bad choices, we have no responsibility to make it convenient for people to hurt themselves, especially when their behaviors hurt innocent bystanders.

Recognizing that your cooperation with smoking supports a habit that results in the death of 1/3 to 1/2 million Americans every year can help you to change your attitudes and behaviors and to become a supporter of nonsmoking.

Company Image

Take advantage of your company image or the type of work you do to underscore a nonsmoking policy. This is a natural for companies involved in health, education or safety, but other employers can use this strategy. Certainly banks can use financial data in their educational materials; retail companies can use marketing data.

Provident Indemnity Life introduced their new nonsmoking policy because they market insurance policies with discounts for nonsmokers. They didn't want their customers offended by smoke in their offices. The Merle Norman Cosmetic Company told employees that one of the reasons for instituting their nonsmoking policy was to be consistent with their image of enhancing beauty.

Expand Involvement

Create bonds between smoking and nonsmoking employees. For instance, pair quitting smokers with dieting buddies or employees on exercise programs. Give nonsmokers who recruit smokers for cessation programs a bonus. Have your nonsmoking employees provide chewing gum or sunflower seeds for smokers. Suggest that nonsmokers also dispense encouragement or thanks, too. Dow Chemical paired quitting smokers and nonsmoking buddies in a raffle for a motorboat.

Involve families. Invite employees' familes into cessation programs. After all, in the words of one manager, "You don't want your employees who are trying to quit smoking going home to a smoky ghetto." Andrew Smith, President of Pacific Northwest Bell, made the decision to offer cessation classes to employees' families on the grounds that the company provides health benefits for employee's families. The response of one employee's spouse was, "Phone company, I love you. My own employer wouldn't provide me with a cessation program, but I got help from you."

When he announced his new nonsmoking policy, Radar Electric President Warren McPherson sent letters to the families of employees who smoked. In his message, he provided an estimate of how much smokers spent each month for cigarettes and he offered a bonus to smokers who would quit. Next he showed a total of the amount of extra money that could represent in a family budget.

Creativity

Any new program is always more welcome when it's implemented with creativity and humor. Small touches can be important in setting the tone you want to achieve.

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When Robert Rosner was implementing a nonsmoking policy at Group Health in Seattle, he anticipated that employees at reception desks would have the main responsibility for confronting any smokers who entered Group Health facilities. To provide receptionists with a positive task involving the new policy, he gave them gifts featuring nonsmoking messages to distribute to visitors.

When Kessler-Ellis Products went smoke-free they gradually reduced the smoking-permitted hours at work. First the initial hour at work was designated nonsmoking. Next, the last hour of the day was declared nonsmoking. Eventually, the hours before lunch and after lunch were added. During this phase-in period, employees who smoked were given a number of "smoking permit" tickets which they could "spend" for permission to smoke one cigarette during an otherwise forbidden period.

Try to replace anything that's taken away. For instance, when you remove the cigarette machines, replace them with a fruit machine, an arrangement of fresh flowers, a health information reading rack or a list of successful quitters. Riviera Motors stocked a refrigerator with vegetables for snacking; quitting smokers and dieting employees enjoyed that.

Separate areas for smoking and nonsmoking are not the only type of solution. Consider creative use of ventilation. Maybe all the smokers could be assigned to one work shift or to the second lunch shift.

Fairness

It's hard to be fair when dealing with incompatible behaviors like smoking and breathing clean air. But for the sake of employee morale, it is important to respect the desire for fair play. Here are two common fairness issues employers have encountered when implementing nonsmoking policies:

1. WHO'S COVERED BY THE POLICY?

- Campbell Soup Company made their offices smoke-free years ago because their production areas were nonsmoking and they wanted an evenhanded policy for all employees.
- MSI Insurance doesn't allow smoking in private offices so their smoking ban in group work areas will be more acceptable. They also recognize that employees from group work areas go into private offices in the course of their work. Furthermore, private offices rarely have private ventilation systems. Allowing smoking in private offices also creates an unnecessary equity problem and it gives the message that smoking is a benefit.
- It is tempting to fudge when it comes to smoking by customers; no one wants to offend them. But remember, most of your customers are probably nonsmokers. Your smoking customers all go to the movies, shop in department stores and do business in many places where smoking is not accepted. Today most people recognize that we are moving toward a smoke-free society.

Companies that have declared themselves smoke-free report their customers accept their restrictions easily. Warren McPherson, the creative president of Radar Electric, had a special card designed to be presented to any customer who entered his building smoking. Attractively printed, it looked like a wedding invitation. Its message was simple; it explained the company's goal to become the first smoke-free electronics supply house in the Puget Sound area and asked the customer to cooperate. Employees were instructed to present the card to any customer who entered the building smoking a cigarette, to make no eye contact, and to walk away immediately so the situation would not involve a personal confrontation.

2. WHY THIS SUDDEN CHANGE IN POLICY?

You may be told you're "changing the rules." Acknowledge that. Sometimes employers do ask employees to make drastic changes, such as moving to new locations. Point out that many policy changes made by your company are in the employees' favor, such as increases in benefits. Also explain that the new nonsmoking policy is based on new information that was not known earlier.

Another fairness argument you can use to increase acceptance of your new nonsmoking policy is to point out that smoking is controlled in computer areas, in production areas and in other places where equipment or materials might be harmed by exposure to smoke or fire. Fairness demands that you exercise the same concern for the well-being of employees who run that equipment. Malcolm Stamper, President of the Boeing Co., uses this reasoning.

A Few Thoughts on Smokers

Don't underestimate the willingness of your smoking employees to comply. After all, nine out of ten say they want to quit smoking. One-third of all smokers try to quit smoking each year; new nonsmoking policy will be a welcome support for them. The phase-in period is a perfect time to offer cessation programs, of course, and you'll probably find that the impending nonsmoking rule will increase enrollment in stop-smoking classes.

Don't overestimate the statement of employees who say they'll quit if they can't smoke at work. Unigard Insurance did lose one chain-smoking employee who

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said he left because of the new nonsmoking policy, but such instances are exceedingly rare. If you don't encourage employees to reduce or quit smoking, you may lose them anyway through heart disease or lung cancer.

Remember, smokers cannot perceive the pollution they create and how horrible it smells. They may think nonsmokers who complain are "off the wall." Until smokers quit and they recover from the damage smoking causes to taste and smell, they really are physiologically unable to realize how offensive smoke is. A classic response of smokers who quit, after two or three months as nonsmokers, is: "I never realized I smoked up a room that way!" or "I never realized how bad smokers smell!" Put this information to use with smokers. Tell them, "We know from other people who have quit smoking that, when they were smokers, they really couldn't smell the smoke and they didn't realize how offensive it is to others."

In the Long Run

You can try separate seating, ventilation, building new partitions, reconciliation meetings. But employers who have gone that route — trying to accommodate smoking at work stations — often decide, as one manager put it, "We were just taking too much time and energy to make it convenient for smokers to kill themselves." The simplest solution is to limit smoking to non-work areas where nonsmokers aren't affected. Tobacco smoke is an unnecessary toxic substance in the workplace.

THE FINAL RECOMMENDATION from other companies who did it? Do it! You'll be glad you did! Remember, most companies who have already acted say it was surprisingly easy and, in retrospect, they don't see why they hesitated.

We end this booklet with a checklist for action, a model policy and a list of companies that have successfully instituted nonsmoking policies. We hope your company will join them soon. New Jersey Group Against Smoking Pollution and The Respiratory Health Association can help you design and implement a policy in your company.

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A CHECKLIST FOR ACTION

___ **Top management is committed.**

___ **Responsibility is assigned** to an individual with authority.

___ **The company announces its intention** to create a new policy.

___ **A planning committee is created,** including management and non-management, smoking and nonsmoking employees. Former smokers are included, too.

___ **A schedule is outlined** by the committee.

___ **Research begins.**
External research:
- ☐ medical, legal, economic and social effects of smoking
- ☐ policies created by other companies

Internal research:
- ☐ physical facilities (ventilation, areas for smoking, facilities shared with another company)
- ☐ employees (% smokers/nonsmokers, level of cooperation)
- ☐ existing policy on smoking
- ☐ legal issues (union contracts, insurance, maintenance contracts)
- ☐ customers (will receptionists explain policy?)

___ **Background education commences** on smoking and why a change is being considered.

___ **The committee drafts a proposed policy** and implementation plan. (Three to nine months is a good time for transition.)

___ **Appropriate individuals and groups review the policy** and give suggestions.

___ **The selected policy and implementation plan are announced** to all employees by a letter from the chief executive officer of the company.

___ **Education continues** via:
- ☐ training sessions for managers
- ☐ "feedback" sessions for employees
- ☐ company newsletter, paycheck inserts
- ☐ signs, displays, materials (leaflets, balloons, etc.)
- ☐ audiovisuals created internally or obtained elsewhere, shown at meetings, on monitors in lounges, health office waiting areas, etc.
- ☐ letters to families of employees
- ☐ releases to public news media.

___ **Changes** to facilitate the new policy are accomplished:
- ☐ signs are obtained and installed
- ☐ receptacles for cigarettes are provided at entrances to nonsmoking areas
- ☐ cigarette machines are removed from premises
- ☐ ventilation changes are made
- ☐ smoking lounges are created

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- ☐ physical separation in cafeteria is created
- ☐ cessation programs are selected, initiated
- ☐ a "buddy system" is created to help smokers planning cessation
- ☐ changes in insurance coverage or maintenance policies are arranged
- ☐ bonus system is created (reward nonsmokers; smokers can qualify for rewards by becoming nonsmokers)
- ☐ an extraordinary incentive campaign is planned — such as construction of a new physical fitness center, with budget based on success of employees in quitting smoking or savings resulting from new policy
- ☐ fitness breaks begin
- ☐ a healthful snack system is created
- ☐ a more healthful menu is introduced in cafeteria

____ **Policy is refined.**

____ **Policy becomes effective.**

____ **Policy is evaluated** and revised.

A MODEL POLICY

This model policy contains elements found in the policies of many companies that have created smoke-free work areas while allowing some designated smoking-permitted spaces. Feel free to adopt it as your policy.

It is our intent to create a smoke-free environment within our company.

Background: Smoking is the major preventable cause of premature death today, killing 1/3 to 1/2 million Americans annually. Nonsmokers, who comprise more than 70% of the adult population in the United States, are harmed by secondhand smoke. The hazards range from immediate reactions (eye irritation, headaches, breathing difficulties) to long-term, serious effects — nonsmokers exposed to smoke may develop lung cancer and may lose lung capacity. Some employees already suffer from respiratory diseases, heart diseases or allergies; these especially susceptible individuals may be at risk in a smoke-filled environment.

Therefore, effective _____, nonsmoking will be the policy in all company areas except where smoking is specifically allowed. This will eliminate an unnecessary toxic substance from our workplace and support all employees in choosing a healthful, nonsmoking way of life.

Smoking-permitted areas may be established where smoking does not endanger life or property, or cause discomfort to others, or violate local laws. Smoking-permitted areas will be designated only upon employee request and will be limited to outdoors and certain lounges.

The company will provide a variety of services to help employees who want to stop smoking, including information, quit smoking clinics and referrals for other sources of help.

Employees who violate this policy on smoking will be subject to the same disciplinary actions that accompany infractions of other company rules, up to and including termination.

This new policy is one of the most important steps that our company can take to improve our work environment. We rely upon the cooperation of all our employees.

_____

Chief Executive Officer

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COMPANIES WITH NONSMOKING POLICIES

These lists include companies that have created nonsmoking policies without the impetus of law and companies whose policies are more extensive than required by law. Not included are thousands of companies in eight states that have clean indoor air acts for the workplace.

Employers Who Provide Some Smoke-Free Areas at Work

The United States Government General Services Administration has a policy which applies to all federal employees who work in GSA-operated or controlled places. GSA also encourages individual government agencies to adopt more extensive policies.

These states control smoking in government workplaces: Alaska, Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Florida, Hawaii, Iowa, Maine, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wisconsin.

Bank of America: San Francisco and elsewhere; 70,000 employees
CHICAGO TRIBUNE: Chicago, Illinois
Cincinnati Bell Telephone Co.: Cincinnati, Ohio
Continental Illinois Bank & Trust Co.: Chicago, Illinois
Dow Chemical
E.I. du Pont de Nemours & Co.: Wilmington, Delaware and elsewhere
Frederick Electronics: Frederick, Maryland; 350 employees
General Electric, General Purpose Control Department: Mebane, North Carolina
General Motors Corp.: Detroit, Michigan; more than 500,000 employees in 151 locations in 26 states
Hewlett-Packard: Palo Alto, California and elsewhere; 30,000 employees
Levi-Strauss: San Francisco, California and elsewhere; 35,000 employees
Martin Marietta Corp.: Bethesda, Maryland and elsewhere
McGraw-Hill: New York City and elsewhere; 15,000 employees
Mobil Oil Corp.: New York, New York
New England Mutual Life Insurance Co.: Boston, Massachusetts
Ontario Ministry of Health: 13,000 employees
J.C. Penney, Inc.: New York, New York
Public Service Electric and Gas: Newark, New Jersey
Ralston-Purina Co.: St. Louis, Missouri; 50,000 U.S. employees
Rockwell International, Rocky Flats Plant, North American Space Operations: Golden, Colorado
Sears, Roebuck & Co.: New York, New York
Sperry Co.: Blue Bell, Pennsylvania; 3,800 employees
Travelers Insurance Co.: Hartford, Connecticut
Xerox Corp.: Stamford, Connecticut
Zale Corp.: Dallas, Texas; 17,000 employees

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